



Cyprus

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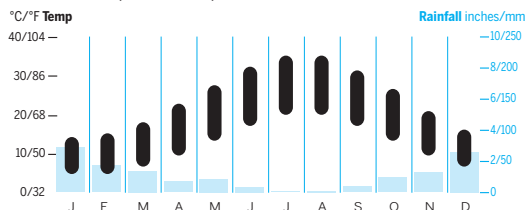
Why Go?

Cyprus (Κύπρος) captures the imagination. This is not your standard Mediterranean island cliché; Cyprus reflects its proximity to Asia and the Middle East in its culture, cuisine and history. Similarly evocative is the contrast between old and new, particularly evident in the capital, Lefkosia (South Nicosia). Here you can see the merging of traditional and modern Cyprus, with dusty dilapidated buildings round the corner from smart boutiques and arty bars. The flip side of this is the tourist-driven areas of Kato Pafos and Agia Napa although, thankfully, development has remained relatively low rise.

Get away from the clamour and head for the green peaks of the Troodos, or the iconic northern Cyprus resort of Kyrenia (Girne), with its picturesque harbour, medieval churches and castles. Most importantly, visit both sides of the island – you'll get a fuller picture of the complex and fractured Cypriot identity. Talks on peace and unification continue: watch this space.

When to Go

Lefkosia (Nicosia)



March–April

Glorious weather and the top religious festival for Greek Cypriots: Easter Week.

June–August

Art, culture and the superb International Music Festival in Lemesos in July.

September–

October Striking autumn colours along the hiking trails in the Troodos mountains.

Connections

The main place to get to and from Cyprus by boat is Turkey – go between Girne and Taşucu or Alanya in summer, and Gazimağusa to Mersin overnight (for details, see p206). Ferries to the Republic of Cyprus were suspended in the 1990s but are expected to resume in 2011, with a route opening between Lemesos and Laurion in the south east of Attica in Greece. Meanwhile mini three-day cruises to Egypt are one option for those wanting to take to the seas (see p206). Most visitors arrive in Cyprus via air to Pafos or Larnaka airports in the (Greek) Republic, and to Ercan airport in the (Turkish) North. Note that the latter is not recognised by the international airline authorities so you can only fly there via Turkey.

ITINERARIES

One Week

With just a week in Cyprus, head to the capital to explore north and south Lefkosia. Cross the border for an overnight trip to Girne, then head south to Lemesos and Pafos for the island's best Graeco-Roman ruins, with a stop in the scenic Troodos Massif.

Two Weeks

With more time, hire a car and explore Frankish ruins in Gazimağusa (Famagusta) and drive up to Polis and the wild Karpas region. If you're up for some more untamed nature, head to the rugged Akamas Peninsula. Then visit Larnaka to pay your respects at the grave of Lazarus.

Essential Food & Drink

» **Meze** A healthy and sociable way to enjoy a wide variety of different foods and flavours, a meze comprises around 30 small plates of food, including dips, vegetables and a wide range of traditional fish and meat dishes, like *calamare* (squid), *keftedes* (meatballs) and *sheftalia* (pork and lamb rissoles).

» **Halloumi** This quintessential Cypriot cheese made from goat's or sheep's milk, or a combination of both, appears everywhere. Enjoy it grilled as a side dish or stuffed in pita bread with salad, or just as it comes with cucumbers and tomatoes.

» **Kebabs** Tuck into the original doner kebab, especially in the north where the traditional shredded lamb is usually wrapped in flat bread and served with salad. *Urfa* kebab comes with onions and black pepper, while *adana* is slightly hot with spicy red pepper.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Republic: euro (€); North Cyprus: Turkish lira (TL)
- » **Official languages** Greek and Turkish
- » **Money** ATMs are plentiful
- » **Visas** Not needed for EU citizens

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 9250 sq km
- » **Capital** Republic: Lefkosia; North Cyprus: Lefkoşa
- » **Telephone area codes** Republic ☎357, North Cyprus ☎90 392
- » **Emergency** ☎112

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	TL1.69
Canada	C\$1	TL1.64
euro	€1	TL2.25
Japan	¥100	TL1.96
New Zealand	NZ\$1	TL1.27
UK	UK£1	TL2.58
USA	US\$1	TL1.60

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel** Republic: €45; North Cyprus: €35
- » **Two-course meal** Republic: €15; North Cyprus: €11
- » **Museum entrance** Republic: €2.50; North Cyprus: €2

Resources

- » **Tourism in North Cyprus** (www.northcyprus.cc)
- » **Official Republic of Cyprus website** (www.visitcyprus.com)